



Healthy Homes
Healthy Children

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Lead Update

Three Companies Found Liable in Rhode Island's Lawsuit Against Paint Manufacturers

On February 22, 2006, a six-member Rhode Island jury unanimously decided that three major paint companies were liable for creating a public nuisance by manufacturing lead pigments and coatings found in paints that have poisoned thousands of Rhode Island children for decades.

This is a landmark victory for lead poisoning prevention advocates across the United States. Rhode Island is the first state in the nation to obtain a verdict against the paint manufacturing industry. Paint companies have previously been sued in other communities across the United States, but they have never lost a case.

Sherwin Williams Co., Millennium Holdings, and NL Industries were ordered by the jury to abate, or clean up, paint that was used generations ago on thousands of Rhode Island homes; however, Judge Michael A. Silverstein has the sole discretion to decide how this is to be accomplished.

After the decision was handed down, Director of Health, Dr. David R. Gifford stated, "We are pleased to collaborate with the Attorney General's office on this important case. We have been working toward our goal of eliminating childhood lead poisoning for nearly 30 years in Rhode Island and we've made great progress. The results of this case should help us do even more to reach that goal. This is a wonderful opportunity to help give the families of our state safe and healthy housing."

PRODUCT WATCH

The following products may contain a dangerous amount of lead:

- **Glowin' Dino and Glowin' Doggy Animal Flashlights** – Voluntarily recalled on 3/1/06
 - Store(s) where sold: Target
 - Manufacturer: The Little Tikes Co., of Hudson, Ohio
 - For more information visit [Hwww.littletikes.com](http://www.littletikes.com)
- **Art Accentz, Changlz, Metal Charms** - Voluntarily recalled on 2/23/06
 - Store(s) where sold: Small craft and scrapbook retail outlets and midwestern retailer Pamida.
 - Importer: Provo Craft & Novelty Inc., of Spanish Fork, Utah.

Two Venous Tests are Required to Establish “Persistent” Lead Poisoning

Effective January 1, 2006, children in Rhode Island must have 2 venous lead test results that are ≥ 15 mcg/dL and at least 90 days apart (but no more than 365 days apart) to be considered persistently lead poisoned. Previously, two capillary (finger stick) tests or a combination of a capillary test and a venous test ≥ 15 mcg/dL were used for this determination. RI CLPPP is now requiring venous tests to assure that the child is lead poisoned before making a referral for services, since capillary tests can be elevated as a result of contamination from improper sampling technique. Children who meet the definition of persistently lead poisoned receive medical follow-up through their primary care provider or Lead Clinic, and are offered an environmental inspection through the Rhode Island Department of Health. If you have questions about this change, please contact Patricia Raymond at (401) 222-5921 or Patricia.Raymond@health.ri.gov.

EPA Proposes Requirements for Lead Safe Work to Protect Children During Renovation, Repair, and Painting Activities

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has published a proposed Federal Rule, Lead; Renovation, Repair, and Painting Program (71 FR 1588), which seeks to minimize the introduction of lead hazards resulting from the disturbance of lead-based paint during renovation, repair, and painting activities in most housing built before 1978. Additionally, this proposal introduces lead training, certification, and safe work practice requirements for contractors involved in these activities. It is only one component of a comprehensive program to ensure the use of lead-safe work practices that will also include training and an education and outreach campaign targeted at both workers and consumers. The EPA believes this new integrated approach will further its goal to eliminate childhood lead poisonings as a major public health concern by the year 2010.

For more information about the EPA proposed rule, Lead; Renovation, Repair, and Painting Program, please consult the EPA fact sheet at <http://www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/rpffactsheet.htm>

Family Service Lead Center Closes

The Family Service Lead Center will no longer provide comprehensive case management to families of significantly lead poisoned children. The Rhode Island Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program appreciates the assistance that the Family Service Lead Center has provided to Rhode Island families over the last two years. The other three Lead Centers in Rhode Island (St. Joseph Hospital Lead Center, Blackstone Valley Community Action Lead Center, and West Bay Community Action Lead Center) continue to provide quality services to affected families.

Online ordering of Educational Materials Now Available

The Rhode Island Department of Health can now accept orders for educational materials online. Visit <http://www.health.ri.gov/T> to access the Online Ordering Center. You can access the center through the home page, or by selecting “Health Topics” and selecting “Online Ordering Center.” Please order your educational materials now for “Lead Poisoning Prevention Month” activities in May.